



# THE MALTESE PRESENCE IN NORTH AMERICA



**E-NEWSLETTER**

Issue 69

FEBRUARY 2025

## THE AMBASSADOR OF MALTA TO THE UNITED STATES PAYS A VISIT TO THE MALTESE AMERICAN COMMUNITY CLUB DEARBORN, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 8<sup>TH</sup>



**Ambassador Xeureb and his wife, Kay, with Miss Malta, Sophia Vella**

Photo courtesy of Lisa Buttigieg LiGreci  
See also pages 17-22.

## The Maltese Presence in North America

**Issue No. 69 February 2025**

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Emma Borg

### **EDITORIAL COMMENT**

While there were fewer accounts of club activities with photos posted on Facebook this past month, the void was happily filled by diplomatic postings. This was especially the case with the Maltese Embassy in Washington.

This issue contains two items relating to President Trump's inauguration (pages 4 and 13), another on the presentation of ambassadorial credentials to Mexico's representative in Washington (pages 13-14), and a fourth on the hosting of Young Professionals in Foreign Policy (pages 14-15).

Before we leave Washington, DC I'd like to take note of the appointment of a former resident of Malta as Director of the White House Office of Presidential Personnel (page 17).

Two events which combined club activities and diplomatic appearances were the visit of the H.E. Godfrey C. Xuereb, his wife, and a couple consuls to the Clubs in Dearborn (pages 1, 18-22) and Detroit (pages 23, 28) respectively.

H.E. John J. Aquilina, Malta's ambassador to Brazil, sent me text and photos relating to Cardinal Mario Grech's visit to Brazil and his meeting with local Maltese clergy (pages 9-10). While this event is beyond North American shores, it's important to note that South America has very few residents of Maltese birth or descent, compared to its continental neighbour, and without something like this newsletter our readership might never be aware of this visit.

Three articles relating to what might be called Maltese Canadian organizations are the Kartolini Mill-Kanada project (pages 15-16), the upcoming production of *INANNA-Rising Goddess of Malta* (pages 7-8), and the monthly luncheon in London, Ontario (pages 11-12).

A tribute to the past is recognized through ticket stubs from two Maltese American organizations in Detroit in 1956 (page 24) and with the photos of the Valentine's dinner and dance held at the Maltese Canadian Club of London in 2016 (pages 24-25).

As an historian, I also like to have something of an “academic” nature in each issue. The short piece on Maltese surnames of Slavic origin is this month's offering (page 6).

If you have ideas to share, wish to be put on the free, bcc electronic mailing lists, would like to learn the newsletter's advertising rates, etc., I may be reached at [danbrock62@gmail.com](mailto:danbrock62@gmail.com).

A belated Happy Valentine's Day.



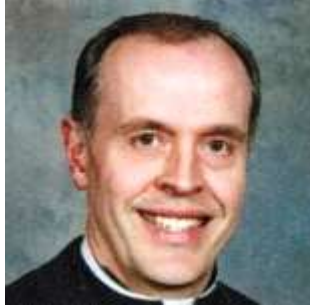
The next big event for the Maltese in North America would appear to be St. Patrick's Day, March 17<sup>th</sup>.

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## ST. PAUL THE APOSTLE PARISH, TORONTO, CANADA

From our Pastor's Desk...



*Fr. Roy Farrell, a diocesan priest within the Archdiocese of Toronto, is pastor of St. Paul the Apostle Parish, Toronto, the only Maltese parish outside Malta worldwide.*

### Parish Bulletin for January 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>

This week, I want to talk about the Jubilee Year called by Pope Francis. It's a special time in the Catholic Church, filled with grace and pilgrimage.

The Jubilee Year, which started on Christmas Eve, 2024, is focused on the theme of "Hope". Pope Francis chose this theme to remind us of the significance of hope, especially during difficult times.

**What is the Jubilee?** The Jubilee is a special holy year in the Catholic Church, traditionally celebrated every 25 years. It is a time for the faithful to make pilgrimages to Rome, seeking spiritual renewal and forgiveness.

This year's Jubilee, however, is unique as it focuses on hope and the need to bring hope to those who are suffering.

**Why was it called?** Pope Francis called this Jubilee to emphasize the importance of hope in our world today. In his papal bull, *Spes Non Confudit* (Hope Does Not Disappoint), he invites us to open our hearts to hope and to be a source of hope for others. The Pope's message is clear: hope is not indifferent but requires courage and action. The purpose of this Jubilee is to strengthen our faith, recognize Christ in our midst, and transform us into pilgrims of Christian hope. It is a time for us to reflect on our lives, seek forgiveness, and renew our commitment to living out our faith.

**Holy Doors** One of the most significant traditions of the Jubilee is the opening of the Holy Doors. The Holy Door at St. Peter's Basilica was opened by Pope Francis on Christmas Eve, symbolizing the beginning of the Jubilee Year. Holy Doors are a powerful symbol of the Church's call to holiness and the opening of our hearts to God's grace.

In our Archdiocese of Toronto, the Holy Door at St. Michael's Cathedral will be opened, inviting all of us to walk through it in a spirit of pilgrimage and renewal.

**Plenary Indulgence** During the Jubilee Year, the Church grants a plenary indulgence to those who fulfill certain conditions. A plenary indulgence is a remission of the temporal punishment due for sins that have already been forgiven in confession. To receive this indulgence, one must make a pilgrimage to the Holy Door, receive the Sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist, and pray for the intentions of the Pope.

**Conclusion** As we embark on this Jubilee Year, let us embrace the theme of hope and strive to be beacons of light in our communities. May this special time of grace bring us closer to God and inspire us to live out our faith with renewed vigor and joy.

The Feast of the Baptism of the Lord is a significant event in the Christian liturgical calendar, particularly for Roman Catholics. Celebrated on the Sunday after the Epiphany, it marks the end of the Christmas season and the beginning of Ordinary Time. The feast commemorates the baptism of Jesus Christ by John the Baptist in the River Jordan.

According to the Gospel accounts, this event is notable for several reasons: 1. Divine Revelation: During Jesus' baptism, the heavens opened, and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in the form of a dove. Additionally, a voice from heaven declared, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased." This moment is seen as a powerful revelation of the Holy Trinity: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. 2. The Start of Jesus' Public Ministry: Jesus' baptism signifies the beginning of His public ministry. It marks His anointing by the Holy Spirit and His mission to bring salvation to humanity.

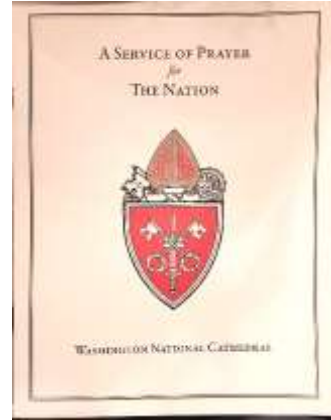
**Example for Believers** Jesus' baptism serves as an example for Christians. Although Jesus was sinless, His baptism by John, who preached repentance, symbolizes humility and the importance of baptism for believers as a sacrament of initiation and purification.

This feast is a time for Catholics to reflect on their own baptism and its significance in their spiritual journey. The celebration usually includes special prayers and readings during Mass that focus on the themes of baptism, the Holy Spirit, and the manifestation of Jesus as the Son of God. It's a beautiful moment to contemplate the profound mysteries of faith and the divine love revealed through Jesus' life and ministry.

### **AMBASSADOR GODFREY XUEREB JOINS IN PRESIDENTIAL INAUGURAL CELEBRATIONS**

**Embassy of Malta  
to the United States of America**

Monday, January 20<sup>th</sup>, was indeed a momentous day for the Embassy of Malta to the US. Ambassador Godfrey Xuereb was joined by his wife during a series of events celebrating the Inauguration of President Donald Trump and Vice President JD Vance. Below are some snapshots from yesterday at the Capitol Hill and Church Service, amongst others 🇺🇸🇲🇹



**President Donald J. Trump**



**Former President Joe Biden and  
former Vice President Kamala Harris**



**Vice President JD Vance**



**Dr. Kay & Ambassador Godfrey Xuereb**

**ACTIVITIES WITHIN  
THE MALTESE COMMUNITIES**

**Dan Brock**

**CALIFORNIA**

**Maltese-American Social Club of San Francisco**

A **Blood Drive** was held at the Club on the afternoon of Saturday, February 1<sup>st</sup>.

**MICHIGAN**

**Maltese American Benevolent Society, Inc**

Club member **Carmen Darmanin** of Milford passed away at the age of 93 on Sunday, January 19<sup>th</sup>.

A **General Membership Meeting** was held in the evening of Thursday, January 30<sup>th</sup>.

**Brunch with the Ambassador of Malta to the United States** took place on Sunday, February 9<sup>th</sup>. (See pages 23, 28.)

**Maltese American Community Club of Dearborn**

**First Friday Mass** was celebrated at 6:30 p.m. on February 7<sup>th</sup>, by **Fr. Joe Mallia**. Dinners could be purchased at the Club before, during, or after Mass.

A **Traditional Maltese Rabbit Dinner** (or **Oven Baked Chicken Dinner**) was held at the Club on the evening of Saturday, February 8<sup>th</sup>. The special guest was **H.E. Dr. Godfrey Carmel Xuereb**, Ambassador of Malta to the United States. (See pages 1, 18-22.)

**NEW YORK CITY**

**Maltese Center NYC**

The first **Bingo** of the year was played at the Lower Hall on the afternoon of Sunday, January 19<sup>th</sup>.

Another community member has passed away.



**St. Paul's Mass** will be celebrated by **Fr. Anthony Saliba** in the Lower Hall on Friday, February 14<sup>th</sup>. This will be followed by a complimentary **Ravioli Dinner**.

**ONTARIO**

**Lehen Malti**

**LEHEN MALTI**  
(Maltese Voice)

OMNI 1 - Ontario  
Saturdays 8:30 a.m.

Tuesdays 11:30 a.m.  
Thursdays 8:30 a.m.

OMNI BC  
Saturdays 2:00 p.m.

OMNI Alberta  
Saturdays 2:00 p.m.

**Malta Band Club**

A **General Membership Meeting** was held on the afternoon of Sunday, January 19<sup>th</sup>. During this meeting the **Elections for the 2025 Executive Committee** took place.

A **Valentine's Day Dinner** was held on Friday, February 14<sup>th</sup>.

The **Spring Concert** will take place on Saturday, March 15<sup>th</sup>.

**Melita Soccer Club, Inc.**

A **Bus trip to Casino Rama** took place on Saturday, January 25, 2025.

A **Valentine Dinner Dance** will be held on Saturday, February 15<sup>th</sup>.

The **Fallsview Casino** in Niagara Falls, Ontario is the destination of a **Bus Trip** on Saturday, February 22<sup>nd</sup>.

The **Carnival Dinner Dance** will take place on Saturday, March 1<sup>st</sup>.

The **St. Patrick's Dinner Dance** will be held on Saturday, March 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**St. Paul the Apostle Parish**

The **St. Paul's Feast Dinner & Dance** took place on Saturday, February 8<sup>th</sup>.



**London**

A **Luncheon** took place at the **Swiss Chalet Restaurant** on Wonderland Road South on the afternoon of Tuesday, January 21<sup>st</sup>. (See pages 11-12.)

The next **Luncheon** is planned for the **Mandarin Restaurant** on Wellington Road South at 12:30 p.m. on Thursday, February 27<sup>th</sup>.

**Windsor****Malta United Society**

A **General Meeting** took place on the evening of Saturday, February 1<sup>st</sup>.

A **Ravioli Dinner** was served on the evening of Saturday, February 8<sup>th</sup>.



### SOME MALTESE SURNAMES OF SLAVIC ORIGIN

**Dan Brock**

Those of us in Canada, particularly in the Maritimes, are aware of the late Maltese Canadian Charles E. "Charlie" Puglisevich. A successful businessman, he was appointed Honorary Consul for the Maritime Provinces in 1984.



Charles E. Puglisevich,  
c. 1988

In Ontario, his grandnephew Niġel Klemenčič-Puglisevich, currently residing in Malta, is also well known within the Maltese Canadian community. Both have been noted in past issues of this newsletter, Charles in the January/February 2019 issue and Niġel in February 2021.

In his herculean tome *The Surnames of the Maltese Islands* Mario Cassar notes Puglisevich as one of the Italo-Slavonic surnames ending in "...ich" still existing in Malta.

According to Niġel Klemenčič-Puglisevich, his direct ancestor, Andriġa Puljizevič (Andrea Puglisevich) was in Malta by 1814. Andriġa's grandfather, Nikola Puljizevič, was born about 1730, in Zaton Mali, a village 8 km northwest of Dubrovnik, Croatia. (See issue # 23, February 2021, page 5, of this newsletter.)

In Malta, especially in Senglea, the surname Mitrovich is recognized in the patriot and politician Giorgio Mitrovich (1795-1885), a native of Senglea, and his paternal grandfather also named Giorgio Mitrovich, formerly of Kotor, Montenegro, then under Venetian rule, who became a successful Maltese privateer (licensed pirate) when corsairing against Muslim ships was still legal.

Cassar lists Metrovich/Mitrovich as one of the extinct Maltese surnames, along with Covacciosvich, Covich, Evanovich, Flaninich, Ivantovich, Mircovich, Perovich, Verinich, and Vidovich.

In examining the baptismal records, between 1805 and 1825, of the Church of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Senglea, I have found parents with the surnames Mitrovich and Vidovich, as noted by Cassar, as well as the following ending in "...ich": Azecovich, Braicovich/Brajcovich, Crasviatervich, Craviarevich, Deusich, Disepich, Filippovich, Franisvich, Giratovich, Girovich, Hierich, Letich, Medavich, Misinovich, Papich, Papvich, Pavicich, Radolich, Rubinich, Shipovich, Soletich, Stanich, Starvich, Vudovich, and Vitevavich. Of these Braicovich/Brajcovich, Deusich, Disepich, Hierich and Mitrovich are given as the maiden surnames of the mothers.

No doubt an examination of other records for the Parish in Senglea, and beyond the aforementioned dates, will reveal other Slavic surnames. I suspect the surname Montenegro, found in the index of baptisms in Senglea between 1727 and 1749, and noting three different fathers with this surname is also of Slavic origin.

How many other Slavic surnames might be found by examining the sacramental registers of Vittoriosa and Cospicua as well as those for the Greek Orthodox Church in Valletta?

What were the origins of these individuals? What occupations did they pursue? (Andrea Puglisevich was the owner of a cargo vessel known as a polacca.) What became of them? (Most are known to have married Maltese women.) Did they remain in Malta? These may be avenues worth pursuing.

These above-noted Slavic surnames alone should indicate that there is more Slavic DNA in the Maltese population than what academics have heretofore posited, based on the belief that some of the Muslim slaves in Malta were not all Black but were of Slavic origin. The late Godfrey Wettinger had cited the surnames Schiavone and Zarb as such possibilities.

## INANNA – RISING GODDESS OF MALTA

Tracy Lamourie

The awe-inspiring historical Pjazza Rjal Teatru in the centre of Malta's beautiful capital city, Valletta, has been chosen as the venue for *INANNA – Rising Goddess of Malta*, a culturally important, truly epic multimedia, live performance, on July 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> in 2025, that will thrill locals and visitors alike. "Local audiences have never seen anything like this before."

A year ago, Canada-based Maltese citizen JOanne Camilleri (the star and visionary creator behind the project), a globally renowned belly dancer and instructor at the prestigious University of Toronto whose parents immigrated to Canada from Mellieħa, made an exciting announcement. Thrilling art and theatre lovers across the island nation, she shared her plans to bring her incredible stage show, *INANNA - Rising Goddess of Malta*, back home to the Maltese Islands. "I am so excited to bring this international Maltese-Canadian multimedia production to my mother country where the story of Inanna began."



JOanne

Camilleri

*INANNA - Rising Goddess of Malta* is a live 90-minute multi-media, dance, circus, and animation projection with an original musical soundtrack. A mix of folk rock and Islamic scales bring the sounds and performance of the east and west together in this production that celebrates Malta's prehistoric culture and circles around Malta's goddess of fertility story for a contemporary audience. As Camilleri puts it, "It is through the mythos of the goddess of love and fertility in the present, that Malta can embrace a celebration of its history via the performing arts."

"*INANNA* is an exciting modern multimedia art project based on one of the oldest stories ever told," says Camilleri. "It truly is a nationally important performance about Malta's critical contribution to the development of society and culture." She also points out that the concept of *INANNA* comes from the Maltese name for Camilleri's Maltese grandmother (in Maltese *in-nanna*, referring to all her grandmothers since antiquity.

"The story of *INANNA* is found inscribed on clay tablets and fragments in *INANNA*'s temples that exist today in Malta and her sister island Gozo," says Camilleri who wrote the fascinating script from the ancient myth of the "the descent of *INANNA*." This epic poem found inscribed in cuneiform on a clay tablet from the early Bronze Age is one of the first stories ever told by the first poet known in history, Edehuanna, the daughter of the Akkadian founder, Sargon the Great and high priestess to the goddess Inanna.

*INANNA* has already been garnering international attention. *Entertainment Monthly* in the United States described it as "an epic stage production" in a full feature article they did about the show. In addition to the *Entertainment Monthly* profile, *INANNA - the Rising Goddess of Malta* was also featured in the November-December 2022 and January 2023 issues of the newsletter, *The Maltese Presence in North America*. Camilleri also sat down with the editors at *Authority Magazine* stateside for a deep dive into her fascinating career for their Live Arts / Theater and Live Performances section.

Camilleri hopes the July 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> performances will be the first of many future performances on the Islands. "It is my vision to share this story in performance on Malta and Gozo and at the *goddess'* neolithic temples where Inanna once lived."



This production was also highly endorsed and promoted amongst the Maltese-Canadian community in Canada and the one million Maltese and Gozitan diaspora around the world by the former Consul General of the Republic of Malta to the Commonwealth of Canada, Dr Raymond. C. Xerri.

Xerri says: "This production is not only unique to the Maltese Islands; it's an original artistic masterpiece with enormous potential in a variety of spheres, which not only narrates one of our civilization's oldest stories but has all the elements and hallmark to transcend into a permanent Maltese heritage production - which can be treasured by all Maltese and millions of tourists alike who visit our islands."

Camilleri agrees. "I see this production becoming a national-level performance that will be representative of Malta's ancient history and will celebrate Malta for both locals and for tourists on an annual basis. Effectively our production will contribute to the cultural preservation of history through the performing arts," she adds with passion. "Internationally, the production will educate the world on Malta/Gozo's critical contribution to the development of modern society through the mythos."

INANNA Productions will be auditioning vocalists, musicians and dance performers from the Maltese islands for this live performance.

JOanne Camilleri is available for media interviews about the exciting INANNA project and all aspects of belly dance. Dr Raymond Xerri is also available to the media for interviews about his support for the INANNA project and how important it will be for the Maltese islands.



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## READERS' COMMENTS

Dan, have a happy New Year. Keep up this beautiful newsletter.

Mark Caruana, New South Wales, Australia

A million thanks for a wonderful issue once again.

As always, I enjoyed every detail in the newsletter and when it's out, I will give myself the pleasure of going through the photos one by one. And, of course re-read the articles for pleasure. You do an amazing job compiling all that information and fitting it so nicely into a coherent whole. Great indeed! Looking forward to the actual newsletter and the next and next and next and.....

Maria Pia Gauci, Malta

Congratulations on an outstanding effort.

I always enjoy reading your Journal.

John J Aquilina,

Ambassador of the Republic of Malta to Brazil

I would like to congratulate you, for compiling such a great newsletter, full of pictures and different articles, that concern Maltese persons who have made and continue to make our island nation so proud to possess so many talents. The initiative to make the Malta language even more accessible to anyone who wants to learn Maltese is in my opinion a most interesting initiative. With the initiative that you are taking through the newsletter, we can be in the know about the Maltese who are living in Canada/USA. Keep up the good work.

George Stagno Navarra, Malta



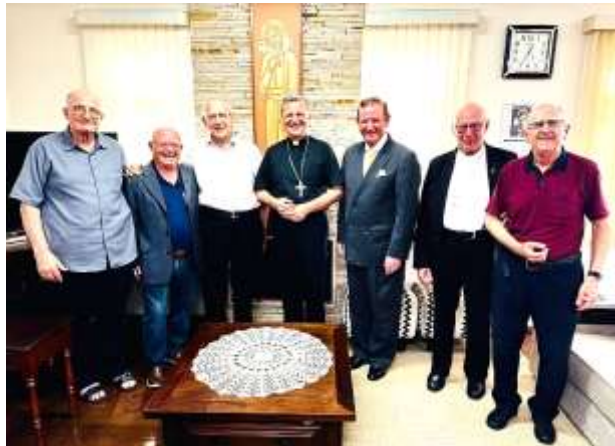
## **CARDINAL MARIO GRECH IN BRAZIL TO MEET WITH LOCAL MALTESE CLERGY**

### **Embassy of the Republic of Malta in Brazil**

Malta's Cardinal Mario Grech, Secretary General of the Vatican's Synod of Bishops, and who is based in Rome, travelled to the Diocese of Jundiáí on the outskirts of São Paulo, Brazil, during the week of January 5<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup>, to visit several members of the Maltese clergy who have been working for many decades among the Catholics in Brazil.

H.E. John Aquilina, Malta's first Ambassador to Brazil, and Malta's first resident ambassador in Latin America, travelled from Brasília to Jundiáí to greet the Cardinal and meet with the Maltese bishop and priests.

"It was an emotional and humbling experience to meet with Fr Xavier Cutajar from Lija, Fr Charles Borg from Sliema, Fr Paulo Mercieca from Qormi, Bishop Emeritus Vincent Costa of the Diocese of Jundiáí, São Paulo, from Birkirkara, and Fr Daniel Balzan from Siggiewi", Mr Aquilina said.



**Fr Xavier Cutajar, Fr Charles Borg,  
Fr Paulo Mercieca, Cardinal Mario Grech,  
Ambassador John Aquilina,  
Bishop Vincent Costa and Fr Daniel Balzan**

During his visit Cardinal Mario Grech addressed a gathering of almost 60 priests and deacons on the outcome of the last Synod of Bishops held in Rome.

Official guests who accompanied Cardinal Mario Grech at the head table were Archbishop Julio Endi Akamine SAC, Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Sorocaba, Cardinal Odilo Pedro Scherer, Cardinal of São Paulo, Bishop Arnaldo Carneiro Neto, Diocese of Jundiáí, and the Maltese Bishop Emeritus Vincent Costa, Diocese of Jundiáí.



**Official Guests  
at the Gathering of Priests and Deacons:  
Archbishop Julio Endi Akamine SAC,  
Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Sorocaba,  
Cardinal Odilo Pedro Scherer,  
Cardinal of São Paulo,  
John Aquilina, Ambassador of Malta to Brazil,  
Cardinal Mario Grech, Secretary General  
of the Synod of Bishops in Rome,  
Bishop Arnaldo Carneiro Neto,  
Diocese of Jundiáí, and Bishop Emeritus  
Vincent Costa, Diocese of Jundiáí**



**Fr Xavier Cutajar and Fr Daniel Balzan  
cutting a cake to celebrate their Golden Jubilee**

Maltese Bishop Vincent Costa has been in Brazil for 55 years, 28 years of which he has served the Brazilian Catholic Community as a bishop.

Each of the other Maltese priests has been in Brazil for more than half a century, and each one has assumed a senior role in the hierarchy of the Catholic Church in Brazil.

Fr Daniel Balzan is Vicar of the Parish of São Roque in São Paulo. Fr Xavier Cutajar is the Vicar of the Parish of Our Lady of Aparecida de Helena Maria, Diocese of Osasco in São Paulo. Fr Paulo Mercieca works at the Seminary of the Diocese of Osasco, and Fr Charles Borg is the Vicar-General of the Diocese of Araçatuba.

Later in the day Cardinal Mario Grech concelebrated a special Holy Mass in Jundiaí's Metropolitan Cathedral, along with Maltese Bishop Emeritus Vincent Costa and the Diocesan Bishop Arnaldo Carneiro Neto.



**Ambassador Aquilina addressing the gathering of priests and deacons from São Paulo**



**The Cathedral Mass  
Fr Silvio Andrei Rodrigues, Deacon Leonardo,  
Bishop Emeritus Vincent Costa,  
Cardinal Mario Grech,  
Bishop Arnaldo Carneiro Neto  
and Fr Adriano Luis Zucculin**



**Crest of Diocese of Jundiaí**



“The Maltese Clergy resident in Brazil and I happily greeted Maltese Cardinal Mario Grech, whose modesty and charm warmed the hearts of the hundreds of Brazilian Catholics whom he met”, Mr Aquilina said.

**Brasília, Brazil**

**DR IAN BORG REPRESENTS MALTA AT DONALD TRUMP’S INAUGURATION**

**The Voice of the Maltese**

Dr Ian Borg, Malta’s Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Tourism, was only one of just eight top government officials from around the world to be invited to the US Capitol Rotunda in Washington DC for the inauguration of Donald Trump as United States President last Monday.

Others on the exclusive honorary guest list included China’s Vice President Han Zheng (deputising for Chinese President Xi Jinping), Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong, and Argentine President Javier Milei. Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni was the only other representative from Europe.

Other invitees included Indian foreign minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, who represented Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and Ecuador President Daniel Noboa. A notable absentee was UK’s Prime Minister Keir Starmer.

During the inauguration ceremony, Dr Ian Borg, who represented Malta as the country’s foreign minister, also met Marco Rubio, congratulated him on his unanimous confirmation by the Senate as Secretary of State, and told him he was looking forward to working with him and his team.

Minister Ian Borg’s participation in the inauguration signifies Malta’s dedication to nurturing international relationships and cooperation globally and underscores Malta’s standing in the international arena.

Dr Ian Borg, who currently serves as Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Tourism, also served as Chair-in-Office of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in 2024.

Dignitaries and diplomats usually attend the inauguration, but it is unusual for heads of state or government leaders to also receive an invitation.

Minister Ian Borg extended his congratulations to Donald Trump on his election as the new President of the United States. He said that Malta looked forward to continuing its close collaboration with the United States of America in the same spirit of friendship and cooperation that has characterised recent years.



**THE PRESENTATION OF A LETTER OF CREDENTIALS**

**Embassy of Malta to the United States of America**

The Non-Resident Ambassador of Malta to Mexico, Godfrey Xuereb, presented copies of his Letter of Credentials to the Ambassador of Mexico to the US, Esteban Moctezuma Barragán, during the week of January 26th. The Ambassador looks forward to continuing the strengthening Malta’s ties with Mexico. 🇮🇹🇲🇽





**HOSTING YOUNG PROFESSIONALS  
IN FOREIGN POLICY**

**Embassy of Malta  
to the United States of America**

The Embassy of Malta to the US had the pleasure of hosting Young Professionals in Foreign Policy during the week of January 26. This event launched YFPF DC's very first flagship programme entitled, "Ambassador Series." The Embassy was honoured to have been selected as the first one to host such an event.

YFPF's event consisted of a fireside chat with Ambassador Godfrey Xuereb whereby the main subject matter revolved around Malta's challenges when it comes to climate change and the initiatives/projects taking place in the country to help combat this. The audience, which was comprised of young professionals and graduates based in DC, was very engaged and avid to learn about Malta's policies and capabilities within this field.

The Embassy thanks YFPF for this opportunity!





**NEW PROJECT WANTS TO DIGITIZE  
MALTESE-CANADIAN  
MIGRANTS' MEMORIES\***

**Emma Borg**

**Toronto's Maltese-Canadian Museum  
joins forces with Magna Żmien  
to preserve 'forgotten' stories**

The Magna Żmien Foundation and the Maltese-Canadian Museum in Toronto are launching a new initiative to preserve the memories of Maltese migrants.

Through the collaborative project, the foundation encourages the public to digitise and safeguard their personal and family collections of photographs and other analogue media.

The Kartolini Mill-Kanada project aims to save Maltese-Canadian memories from being lost while fostering a deeper appreciation of their legacy.

Magna Żmien is inviting the public to a Sharing Session on Saturday, January 25<sup>th</sup>, at 11 a.m. at the Valletta Design Cluster, where they will provide updates on the project following the team's visit to Canada late last year.

"The story of Maltese migrants is often forgotten, and these people gave a valid contribution to their host countries," said Andrew Alamango, artistic director of Magna Żmien.

He highlighted how some Maltese Canadians became parliamentary secretaries, worked for Google, and served as key figures in their communities.



**Kartolini mill-Kanada's sharing session  
which will involve a talk  
and presentation on the project**

Photo: Magna Żmien Foundation



**Andrew Alamango at the entrance of the Museum, which is situated right near the St Paul The Apostle Church**

Photo: Magna Żmien Foundation

Alamango emphasised that these stories are more relevant than ever. Noting that after World War II, Maltese migrants moved to host countries like the UK, Australia, and Canada.

"But now, Malta has become a host country for many people. However, we have forgotten that in times of trouble, we migrated. We move because we have to, not because we want to."

During their visit to Canada, the Magna Żmien team toured the Maltese-Canadian Museum in Toronto, a partner in this initiative.

The museum, curated by Richard Cumbo, opened to the public in 2017 and houses thousands of Maltese-related artefacts, ranging from Neolithic figurines to a large exhibit on the "Miss Malta Pageant," organised by the Maltese-Canadian Society of Toronto, which ran from 1967 to 2007.

"In the early 1900s, life for the small Toronto Maltese community was very difficult. Prejudice and discrimination were rampant among the mainly English population. However, with the huge influx of Maltese after World War II, the attitude towards the Maltese (and other minor ethnic groups) changed for the better, and life became easier," Cumbo explained.



**Richard Cumbo, curator of the Maltese Canadian Museum**

Photo: Magna Żmien Foundation

The museum operates without funding and relies on volunteers, all of whom are over 75 years old. Despite these challenges, it is enthusiastic about collaborating with Magna Żmien to ensure the continuity of its work.

Cumbo hopes the museum can eventually serve as a digitisation hub but, for now, it will act as a point of contact for Maltese-Canadian families who wish to contribute their photos, videos, or audio. These materials will be digitised either in Malta or at York University in Toronto.

#### ADVERTISING

"I feel that it is very important that the Maltese diaspora remains connected in order to better preserve, chronicle, and promote our rich history and culture," said Cumbo.

The project is supported by Arts Council Malta, the Maltese High Commission in Canada, the Maltese-Canadian Museum in Toronto, and York University.

*\*This article appeared in the Times of Malta, 24 January 2025, and is reprinted here courtesy of Emma Borg.*



**Maltese emigrants on board the *Vulcania*, June 19, 1948, en route to Halifax, NS**

**JANUARY LUNCHEON  
AT THE SWISS CHALET**

**Dan Brock**

On Tuesday, January 21<sup>st</sup>, the coldest day up to this time this year, more than 25 of us gathered at the Swiss Chalet on Wonderland Road South in London for our usual monthly luncheon.

The following are photos of some of those present.



**Mariam & Ron McLean**



**Paul Zammit and Mary Vella**



**Frank & Marlene Mifsud**



**Gloria Heffler and Elsa Zammit**



**A quarter chicken meal**



**Barbara & Ted Gauci**



**Jim McDonald**



**Helen Ditchfield, Carol Hilton,  
and Lynda Galea**



**Melrose Paquet & Monica Micallef**



**Bernadette & Joe Gall**



**Manny Micallef, Deo & Miranda Catania**



**3060 Wonderland Road South**



## **SERGIO GOR: FROM MALTA TO THE WHITE HOUSE**

**Dan Brock**

Sergio Gor, a 38-year-old publisher and long-standing adviser to the now President Donald J. Trump, took office as Director of the White House Office of Presidential Personnel on January 20<sup>th</sup>. As such, he is in charge of vetting at least 4,000 political appointments, including more than 1,000 positions requiring senate approval.



**Sergio Gor with Donald Trump in July 2024, following the failed assassination attempt on the then Republican presidential candidate**

Sergio Gorokhovsky (aka Gor) is said to have been born in Malta on November 30, 1986, although it has been reported that: “Those who have known him personally say that before immigrating (*sic.*) from Malta he had been born in the Soviet Union.” In any case, he grew up in Cospicua and immigrated to the United States with his parents at the age of 12 in 1999.

After attending high school in suburban Los Angeles, California, he continued his studies at George Washington University in Washington, DC.

It was also while at university that Sergio got interested in conservative college activism and led the Young America’s Foundation’s chapter on campus. He was recognized as one of YAF’s top student activists in 2007 and in 2008.

It was sometime after this that Sergio anglicized his Russian surname to Gor.

In 2008, Gor was an activist in “Catholics for McCain,” supporting the ultimately unsuccessful presidential bid of former US Republican senator John McCain who was pro-life and committed to nominating judges who were pro-life.

Sergio had held key roles with the Republican National Committee (RNC) and Fox News before working for Republican representatives Randy Forbes, Michele Bachmann, and Steve King. In 2013, Gor became an aide to libertarian conservative Kentucky senator Rand Paul.

On a visit to the Vatican in 2016, Gor met with Pope Francis and was given, “a white skull cap that he had worn on his head.”



**Sergio Gor meeting with Pope Francis, 2016**

In June 2020, Gor left his post as Senator Paul’s deputy chief of staff to serve as chief of staff for the Trump Victory Finance Committee, a joint fundraising committee for President Trump’s re-election campaign and the Republican National Committee.

When Trump left office in January 2021, Gor headed to Florida with him and joined forces with Donald Trump, Jr. to found the conservative publishing house Winning Team Publishing.

In September 2024, the company published Trump’s *Save America*, the front cover of the book featuring a photo of the Republican presidential candidate bloodied, with fist raised, following the assassination attempt in July.

Gor also fundraised for Trump’s super political action committee (PAC) – a type of organisation that pools and distributes campaign donations – Right for America, which raised more than \$72 million for Trump’s election campaign.

As Director of the White House Office of Presidential Personnel, “having a loyalist’s loyalist like Gor at PPO will be key” to weeding out disloyalty to Trump among career Republicans.

### CELEBRATING ST. PAUL'S FEAST

**Lisa Buttigieg LiGreci**

The feast of St. Paul's Shipwreck was celebrated at the Maltese American Community Club of Dearborn on the evening of Saturday, February 8<sup>th</sup> with a traditional Maltese rabbit dinner. Our special guest was the Maltese Ambassador to the United States, His Excellency Godfrey Carmel Xuereb.

The Maltese American Community Club  
together with  
The Hon. Consul of Malta, Paul M. Borg  
With Special Guest  
The Ambassador of Malta to the United States  
H.E. Dr. Godfrey Carmel Xuereb  
*Request the pleasure of your company to Celebrate*

# St Paul's Feast

With a Traditional Maltese Rabbit Dinner or Oven Baked Chicken Dinner

Learn more about the Maltese Heritage with a video Presentation that will be Played during the event.

**Saturday, Feb. 8<sup>th</sup>**  
Doors Open at 6:00pm  
Dinner Served at 6:30pm  
A Traditional Maltese Rabbit Dinner or Oven Baked Chicken Dinner

**Donations:**  
\$30 Members  
\$35 Non-Members  
\$10 Kids 10 & Under

For ticket information call Rita Vella Cruz (313) 846-7077

Maltese American Community Club, Dearborn | 5221 Oakman Blvd., Dearborn, MI 48126



**Our greeters and ticket takers, Mary Motowski and Rita Vella-Cruz. Rita was also the event coordinator and organized the whole thing**



**Paul Borg and Marty Micallef preparing the rabbit, a three-day process**



**Club President, Brian Vella welcoming the crowd and introducing Ambassador Xuereb and Paul Borg, Maltese Consul for Detroit**



Another sold out event



Paul Borg, with outstretched right hand, thanking the volunteers in the kitchen.  
L-R: Marty Micallef, Tony Borg, Joe Borg, Charles Pace,  
Paul Borg, Joe Formosa (seated), and Neil Durkin  
Absent: Doris Durkin & John Abela.



Fenek



Served with patata l-forn



**Our Chef Paul Borg with his right-hand man, Joe Formosa**



**Paul Borg serving up some pasta for the Ambassador**



**Tom Muscat and his daughter Margaret Purdy say grace**



**Consul Petra Grech opting for chicken**



**My rabbit dinner, yummy**



**The Muscat siblings  
Mike, Carmen, & Margaret  
selling 50/50 tickets**



**Our 50/50 draw winners!  
Gerry Abela won the cash  
and Mary Mifsud  
won a copy of *Mom's Maltese Cookbook***



**Miss Malta, Sophia Vella  
drawing the winning tickets  
for the 50/50 draw**



**Ambassador Xuereb and his wife Kay.  
with Miss Malta**



**Our bartenders: McKenna Vella,  
Nicholas Duchyta, and Shirley Vella**



**Ambassador Xuereb  
with Club President Brian Vella**



**And finally, a shot of myself  
with Ambassador Xuereb and his wife Kay**

### BRUNCH WITH THE AMBASSADOR OF MALTA TO THE UNITED STATES

Tanya Caruana

The Maltese American Benevolent Society in Detroit hosted a brunch with H.E. Godfrey Carmel Xuereb and his wife Dr. Kay Xuereb on Sunday, February 9<sup>th</sup>.



Thank you to everyone who volunteered and attended our brunch with the Ambassador.

**MEMENTOS FROM DETROIT  
IN THE MID FIFTIES**

**“Corktown Gerry” Abela**

I was 6 years old... lol.

844 Michigan Avenue was the first Maltese Club...they had to move to the current location because of the I-10 (Lodge Freeway) construction!!



**VALENTINE’S DAY DINNER AND DANCE  
AT THE MALTESE CANADIAN CLUB OF LONDON,  
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2016**

Dan Brock







**Barbara Gauci and Censa Vella preparing favours for each guest days in advance**



**Tony Vella and Ted Gauci with Loretta Brock, the 50/50 draw winner**



**Guests select from a wide variety of dishes**



**Carmen & Tony Cauchi in the foreground**



**Doris Condorato checks her tickets as the winning number is announced**



**Dancing the night away**

## MALTESE ORGANIZATIONS IN NORTH AMERICA

### Festa San Gejtanu Association

c/o 5745 Coopers Avenue, Mississauga, ON  
L4Z 1R9  
647-232-8845

### Festa San Gorg Association of Toronto

c/o 36 Sequoia Road, Vaughan, ON L4H 1W6  
905-216-8432/416-277-2291

### Gozo Club Toronto

c/o 1205 Royal York Road, Toronto, ON M9A 4B5  
416-231-9710  
[gozoclub@gmail.com](mailto:gozoclub@gmail.com)

### Inanna on Stage

[www.joannedancer.com](http://www.joannedancer.com)  
c/o 356 Pacific Avenue, Toronto, ON M6P 2R1  
416-707-2355  
[desertdancer007@yahoo.ca](mailto:desertdancer007@yahoo.ca)

### Knights of Columbus - Canada – Council # 12782

c/o St Patrick's Church, 921 Flagship Drive,  
Mississauga, ON, L4Y 2J6  
905-270-2301 (Church)  
[stpatricksmi@archtoronto.org](mailto:stpatricksmi@archtoronto.org)  
Grand Knight Amadeo Cuschieri

### Legion of Mary – “Our Lady of the Migrant”

c/o St. Paul The Apostle Parish  
3224 Dundas St. W., Toronto M6P 2A3  
Tel: 416-767-7054  
[www.saint-paul-Maltese.com](http://www.saint-paul-Maltese.com)  
[stpaulmssp@gmail.com](mailto:stpaulmssp@gmail.com)  
President: Mary Vella

### Lehen Malti

[https://www.omnitv.ca > shows > lehen-malti](https://www.omnitv.ca/shows/lehen-malti)  
c/o 2387 Chilsworthy Avenue., Mississauga, ON  
L5B 2R4  
Contact Person: Joe Sherri  
416-571-3944  
email [.lehenmalti@hotmail.com](mailto:lehenmalti@hotmail.com)

### Malta Band Club Mississauga

5745 Coopers Ave., Mississauga, ON L4Z 1K9  
905-890-850  
[www.maltabandclub.com](http://www.maltabandclub.com)  
[maltabandclub@bellnet.ca](mailto:maltabandclub@bellnet.ca)



### Malta United Society of Windsor, Ontario

2520 Seminole St., Windsor, ON N8Y1X4  
519-974-6719  
[maltaunitedsociety.windsor@gmail.com](mailto:maltaunitedsociety.windsor@gmail.com)  
Opening hours: Saturday 6:00 p.m.-12:00 a.m.  
(Except holidays)

### Malta Village Association (Est. 1995)

c/o 3256 Dundas Street West, Toronto M6P 2A3  
Tel: 416-769-2174  
Fax: 416-769-2174  
[maltabakeshopltd@gmail.com](mailto:maltabakeshopltd@gmail.com)  
att: Antonia Buttigieg

### Maltese American Benevolent Society, Inc.

1832 Michigan Ave. Detroit, MI 48216  
313-961-8393  
<http://detroitmaltese.com>  
Opening hours:  
Friday 5:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.  
Sunday 12:00 p.m. -9:00 p.m.



### Maltese American Community Club of Dearborn

5221 Oakman Blvd, Dearborn, MI 48126  
313-846-7077  
[info@malteseamericanclub.org](mailto:info@malteseamericanclub.org)  
Opening hours: Monday, Wednesday & Saturday  
10:00 am. – 1:00 p.m.  
Dinners served: Friday evenings 6:00 p.m. – 10:00  
p.m.  
Before and after 7:00 p.m. first  
Friday Mass



**Maltese-American Social Club of San Francisco**

924 El Camino Real, South San Francisco, CA  
94080

650-871-4611

[contact-us@Maltese-AmericanSCSF.org](mailto:contact-us@Maltese-AmericanSCSF.org)

Opening hours: Tuesday 5:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.  
(every 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month only)  
Thursday 5:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.  
Friday 5:00 p.m.– 1:00 a.m.  
Sunday 9:00 am.- 5:00 p.m.

**Maltese Canadian Association of the City of Hamilton (MCACH)**

c/o 381 Fairview Drive, Brantford ON N3R 2X7  
[mcach1964@gmail.com](mailto:mcach1964@gmail.com)

**Maltese Canadian Association (Gozo)**

c/o Trillium, Sqaq Nru 1, Triq it-Tigrija, ix-Xagħra  
Tel: 011 356 21560656

[mcagozo@hotmail.com](mailto:mcagozo@hotmail.com)

**Maltese-Canadian Cruisers**

c/o 5745 Coopers Avenue, Mississauga, ON  
L4Z 1R9

416-524-2573

att: Gianni Borg

**Maltese Canadian Cultural Association, The**

c/o Carl Azzopardi  
[info@themcca.ca](mailto:info@themcca.ca)

**Maltese-Canadian Museum**

St. Paul the Apostle Church Complex  
3224 Dundas St. W., Toronto, ON M6P 2A3  
416-767-7054

**Maltese Canucks**

c/o 3336 Dundas Street West, Toronto, ON,  
M6P 2A4

416-909-7357/414-670-2662

[carl@isgtransport.com/b\\_azzo18@yahoo.com](mailto:carl@isgtransport.com/b_azzo18@yahoo.com)

**Maltese Center, NYC**

27-20 Hoyt Ave. S. Astoria, NY 11102  
718-728-9893

[info@themaltesecenter.com](mailto:info@themaltesecenter.com)

Opening hours:

Wednesday and Friday 5:00 p.m. – 11:00 p.m.  
Saturday and Sunday 8:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.

**Maltese Cross Foundation of California**

PO Box 698, San Carlos, CA 94070

**Maltese Culture Club of Durham**

c/o 124 Ribblesdale Drive, Whitby, ON L1N 7C8  
289-939-8377

[mmmpastizzi@gmail.com](mailto:mmmpastizzi@gmail.com)

**Maltese Heritage Association San Francisco Bay Area**

[maltesheritageassociation@gmail.com](mailto:maltesheritageassociation@gmail.com)

**Maltese Heritage Program (Toronto)**

c/o 59A Terry Drive, Toronto, ON, M6N 4Y8  
Coordinator: Carmen Galea

416-766-5830

[carmengalea4949@gmail.com](mailto:carmengalea4949@gmail.com)

**Maltese Historical Society (San Francisco)**

[c/o\\_leprofess@aol.com](mailto:c/o_leprofess@aol.com)

**Melita Soccer Club Inc.**

3336 Dundas St. W., Toronto, ON M6P 2A4  
416-763-5317

[melitaclub@gmail.com](mailto:melitaclub@gmail.com)

**St. Paul the Apostle Parish**

3224 Dundas St. W. Toronto, ON M6P 2A3  
416-767-7054

[www.saint-paul-maltese.com](http://www.saint-paul-maltese.com)

[stpaulmssp@gmail.com](mailto:stpaulmssp@gmail.com)

**St. Paul the Apostle Parish Mission Group**

c/o 281 Gilmour Ave., Toronto, ON M6P 3B6  
416-708-8627

[www.facebook.com/john.vella.1044186](https://www.facebook.com/john.vella.1044186)

[giovanvel@sympatico.ca](mailto:giovanvel@sympatico.ca)

**St. Paul the Apostle Youth Group (Toronto)**

3224 Dundas Street West, Toronto, ON M6P 2A3  
647-524-1115

[jason.borg@hotmail.ca/sborg@rogers.com](mailto:jason.borg@hotmail.ca/sborg@rogers.com)

**St. Paul's Maltese Choir**

c/o St Paul the Apostle Parish  
3224 Dundas St. W., Toronto M6P 2A3  
416-767-7054

[www.saint-paul-maltese.com](http://www.saint-paul-maltese.com)

[stpaulmssp@gmail.com](mailto:stpaulmssp@gmail.com)

President: Lino De

## BRUNCH AT THE MALTESE AMERICAN BENEVOLENT SOCIETY IN DETROIT WITH THE AMBASSADOR OF MALTA TO THE UNITED STATES



Photos courtesy of Tanya Caruana.  
See also page 23.